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Item 8 of the provisional agenda*
Multi-stakeholder dialogue

Multi-stakeholder dialogue

Note by the Secretariat

Addendum

Discussion paper contributed by the Farmers and Small Forest Landowners Major Group**

Summary

Clear and reliable framework conditions, with sound legislation and fair law enforcement procedures in place, are the prerequisites for the development of a sustainable forestry sector. Access to resources needs to be ensured as well as access to relevant information, services and markets. The value added cooperation between Governments and forest-related organizations and processes within the framework of an international arrangement on forests (United Nations Forum on Forests) can have a crucial role in creating these enabling conditions.

Property rights are often the first step towards sustainable resource use and yet their importance is not adequately recognized in the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action. Policy and decision makers need to give higher priority to the establishment of clear ownership structures in favour of family forest owners and community forest owners.

The full potential of the forest sector in contributing to the Millennium Development Goals can be developed only in partnership with other sectors such as agriculture, energy, research, transport, tourism, etc. In this respect, national forest programmes are crucial in defining mutually supportive and beneficial objectives.

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** Prepared by the Confederation of European Forest Owners.

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Capacity-building and training need to be given priority for the sustainable development of the world's forest resources. Well-informed and well-trained family forest owners will take responsible decisions and thus each will contribute individually to the shared objectives of sustainable development.

The underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation are to be found outside the sector. There is a need to develop strategies that create values and incentives for the sustainable conservation and use of forest goods and services.

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Introduction

1. The present discussion paper highlights essential elements based on written and oral contributions from the major group of small forest owners (family forest owners) to the United Nations Forum on Forests process from its first to its fourth session.

2. The family forest owners network currently assembles family forest owners from Australia, Canada, Costa Rica, Europe (23 European countries) and the United States of America. In the future, increased efforts will be taken to reach out to family forest owners and community forest owners in the southern hemisphere, in particular to existing networks in South America and Africa, to achieve a comprehensive view on the variety of challenges and opportunities that this major group is facing.

3. Family forest owners, knowing that the generations to follow will also depend on goods and services from their forests, have a genuine interest in a balanced approach to sustainable forest management. The responsibility of family forest owners for maintaining the forest on a long-term basis is firmly rooted. Family forest owners stand for efficient and sustainable use of their forest resources serving multiple purposes and values based on long-term generation-bridging thinking.

4. Sustainable forest management and the quantitative and qualitative enhancement of the world's forest resources play a key role in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, notably Goals 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; 7: Ensure environmental sustainability; and 8: Develop a global partnership for development.

5. The practical know-how of family forest owners on the use of forest resources around the globe combined with sound scientific knowledge offers a great potential for responsible and sustainable action on the ground.

I. Brief assessment of the implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action

A. Secure property and land tenure rights: the key to responsible and sustainable action

6. As stated in paragraph 40 of the note by the Secretariat on financing for sustainable forest management: current challenges in the changed financial environment dated 27 October 2003 (E/CN.18/AC.2/2003/2), "property rights are often the first step towards sustainable resource use". The basis for sustainable forest management is secure property and land tenure rights. Without secure property and land tenure rights, neither a sense of responsibility, nor an interest in managing forest in such a way as to ensure that they meet present and future needs, can be developed.

7. Ownership — in particular family ownership and community forest ownership — creates values, like the production of renewable material, the protection of water reservoirs, and the conservation of biological diversity and the

supply of food. Giving the right of ownership to a large number of people leads to the creation of a variety of values. The owner's right to use and manage the multiple goods and benefits of forests contributes to a strong sense of responsibility for the conservation of this natural heritage.[1]

8. The positive effect of clear ownership structures in favour of family forest owners for the responsible and sustainable management of the world's forest resources is not recognized as yet by policy and decision makers.

9. The global forest policy dialogue needs to recognize that one important building block in achieving the above-mentioned Millennium Development Goals is the commitment to establishing secure property and land tenure rights and ensuring the access to forest resources of family forest owners and community forest owners.

B. National forest programmes: building partnerships

10. The immediate and long-term goals of the forest-based sector need to be embedded in cross-sectoral strategies with other policies that have a direct impact on the sustainable development of forest resources. The products, goods and services provided by sustainable forest management have cross-sectoral and society-wide importance, for example, for the substitution of non-renewable materials, the conservation of biological diversity, the protection of water reservoirs, the contribution to renewable energy targets, and the development of recreational services, and as a reservoir for the health and medical sector.

11. National forest programmes provide a viable mechanism through which to develop these cross-sectoral strategies. They should be used to raise the profile of the forest-based sector in defining and implementing priorities for national sustainable development strategies.

12. Family forest owners have a prominent role in national forest programmes. They act as interested and involved parties and simultaneously as decision makers on the ground. It is thus essential that national forest programmes be developed in a partnership spirit that leads to an even distribution of costs and benefits for the implementation of sustainable forest management.

C. Capacity-building and economic viability: helping forest owners to help themselves

13. Know-how and understanding on the complex nature of sustainable forest management are the basis for its implementation. Sustainable forestry is not about trees, but about people. Investment in the capacity of family forest owners is key in achieving sustainable forest management.

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[1] Center for International Forestry Research, *Forests and People: Research that Makes a Difference* (available from http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/publications/pdf_files/AReports/CIFOR%2010th_ANNIV_1-38.pdf). In Africa and Asia, villagers participating in adaptive collaborative management have said that it increased their sense of ownership over forest resources and gave them the confidence to participate in processes that would affect their lives and their environment for the better. (Stripped down to its basics, adaptive collaborative management encompasses establishing institutional arrangements and processes that encourage local democracy and collaboration and provide the time and space for group reflection.)

14. Forest owners associations are, in that respect, becoming increasingly important. They are the most important structural mechanism through which to overcome the fragmentation of ownership. It is mainly cooperation through a forest owner association that enables individual small forest owners to participate actively in the wood market. Without the consolidation of logistics and harvesting, the majority of small forest owners would not have the capacity to invest in the sustainable management of their forests. Forest owner associations are, in addition, key multipliers for the dissemination and successful implementation of national and global policies.

15. Economic viability is a prerequisite for carrying out sustainable forest management. Financial security is needed for the enhancement of social, cultural and ecological values. Fair market conditions and a long-term reliable legal framework that is effectively enforced are minimum requirements for economically viable forest management.

D. Underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation: restoring the value of forest goods and services

16. The reasons for deforestation and forest degradation are, in most cases, to be found outside the forest sector itself: poverty and the demand for food and energy of growing populations are among the main underlying causes.

17. Strategies for the preservation and extension of the world's forest resources need to address, in the first place, the primary underlying causes, in particular in terms of the alleviation of poverty.

18. In Europe, where more than half of the forests are owned and managed by families, the forest area increases by 920,000 hectares per year. An adequate valuation of the variety of forest goods and services will give family forest owners the incentive to continue to invest in sustainable forest management to the benefit of the generations to follow.

II. Priority areas for action

19. Family forest owners depend on a fair operating environment within which to optimize the sustainable management of wood and non-wood products. Policy and decision makers are asked to concentrate their efforts on establishing conditions for a long-term reliable legal framework within which social beneficial and economic viable investments can be made.

20. Sustainable development is increasingly called into question by the proliferation of single issue-driven conventions and processes with an impact on the forest-based sector. There is a strong need for the United Nations Forum on Forests to take the political responsibility for the sustainable development of the forest-based sector.

21. Policy and decision makers need to be aware that the family forest holding is where the "rubber hits the road"! Conflicting policies will finally decide on the viability and sustainability of small forest ownership.

III. Recommendations on achievable goals and targets

22. Value-added international cooperation should capitalize on the experiences gained in the regional forest policy processes, where substantial progress in defining criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management respecting regional priorities and needs has been achieved.

23. It is recommended that the international arrangement on forests (United Nations Forum on Forests) facilitate the exchange of experiences of the regional forest policy processes with respect to the implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action and thus promote the linkages between these processes.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

24. **The international arrangement on forests (United Nations Forum on Forests) needs to raise its profile as global policy forum where high-level commitment is achieved to promoting the abilities of the forest-based sector to implement the Millennium Development Goals. The discussion and elaboration on technical issues should be left to the assembled expertise within the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.**

25. **The backbone of a strong international arrangement on forests (United Nations Forum on Forests) comprises strong regional forest policy processes that bring their expertise to the global discussion and decision-making. In its future work programme, the international arrangement on forests (United Nations Forum on Forests) needs to strengthen the regional elements.**

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Note by the Secretariat**

Addendum

Discussion paper contributed by the indigenous peoples major Group***

Summary

In the present paper we seek to address the key concerns and recommendations that indigenous peoples have expressed regarding the work, mandate and future of the United Nations Forum on Forests.[1] We seek to draw together stated concerns and recommendations that have been voiced by indigenous peoples throughout the processes of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF), the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) and the latest incarnation of the United Nations Forum on Forests regarding the relevance and impact of these forums on the lives and future of the world's indigenous peoples.

At the fifth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, there are two key agenda items, an assessment of the work done in the past by the Forum, and the possible future forms of an international arrangement or arrangements on forests. To assist the United Nations Forum on Forests in its decisions, the present paper addresses two key points:

(a) The implementation of the proposals for action relevant to indigenous peoples over the course of the Forum's work;

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(b) Indigenous peoples' requirements for any possible future arrangement if it is to answer the Forum's mandate, as a body in the United Nations system, to uphold human rights commitments of States and preserve the world's forests.

The present paper takes the position that indigenous peoples are unique in their relationship to the forests on which they depend and towards which they hold a relationship of care and management. They have lived in harmony and nurtured their forest and biodiversity through their skills, practices, knowledge and a holistic understanding of the environment, which has been evolved and integrated into their culture and way of life. Nowadays, their forests and lives are under threat from so-called mega-development projects, mining, logging concessions and biopiracy activities. The paper also holds that indigenous peoples are not merely stakeholders in a discussion about future forms of forest agreements and management principles, but rather are rights holders by virtue of the unique position described. Significant concerns exist about the underlying assumptions with which the United Nations Forum on Forests and States involved have been acting, and we would like to bring those concerns to the fore here. The Convention on Biological Diversity has recognized that the "full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities" is essential to the sustainable and just management of the world's biodiversity. This principle must be upheld in all bodies within the United Nations system, to ensure that best practice is shared between United Nations agencies and bodies.

It is with this background in place that the present paper will review some of the past work of the United Nations Forum on Forests, and provide recommendations for its future work, or the arrangement that replaces it.

[1] The present paper is not to be considered representative of the perspectives of the world's 300 million indigenous peoples, for they are diverse and representative of a truly global array of social, environmental, economic and cultural circumstances. Indeed, although it seeks to address their concerns, the paper is not representative of the 50 million persons living in the tropical rainforests.

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I. Introduction

1. The organization that has prepared the present discussion paper, the International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests (IAITPTF), was founded in Penang, Malaysia in 1992. IAITPTF is the only intercontinental indigenous peoples' organization in the world and incorporates indigenous peoples' organizations from more than 47 countries within nine regions of the world: West Africa, Central Africa, East Africa, Central America, South America, South Asia, South-East Asia, Bahasa and the Pacific. IAITPTF has actively participated in international forestry policy debates since the Rio Summit in 1992. In 1996, the International Alliance co-organized the International Meeting of Indigenous and Other Forest-Dependent Peoples on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of all types of Forests, held in Leticia, Colombia under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF). The outcomes of the Leticia meeting provided crucial input to international processes on forests, which were enhanced by the Leticia Declaration, which included a number of indigenous peoples' proposals for action.

2. Indigenous peoples' proposals for action were partially incorporated into the proposals for action that were drafted and adopted as a "global consensus" on forest policy and forest management during the course of the deliberations in IPF and the subsequent Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF). The United Nations Forum on Forests was established with the mandate to facilitate and promote the implementation of these IPF/IFF proposals for action. However, to date there have been few independent reviews of the extent to which Governments in different parts of the world have fulfilled their commitments. While paper commitments — reports to the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and production of national strategy documents, such as national forest plans, national forest action programmes and national biodiversity strategy and action plans, can easily be identified, information on effective implementation, both in the detail of law and policy and particularly in actions on the ground, is far more difficult to obtain.

3. It was therefore decided that IAITPTF would, in collaboration with the Forest Peoples Programme and with support from the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests, commission a range of case studies to allow review of implementation by indigenous peoples and support organizations. These case studies were presented and discussed at the Expert Meeting on Traditional Forest-Related Knowledge and the Implementation of Related International Commitments held in San José, Costa Rica, from 6 to 10 December 2004. In order to establish an environment in which globally applicable recommendations could potentially be drafted, participants for the Meeting were drawn from countries and peoples throughout the world. Participant selection also focused on having a range of major international agencies relevant to forest policy, relevant regional and international non-governmental organizations, government representatives and United Nations bodies relevant to the topic. The total number of participants was 161, with 104 indigenous peoples' representatives, 9 United Nations and international agencies' representatives, 26 non-governmental organizations representatives, 15 governmental representatives and 5 representatives of the scientific community. The Meeting resulted in detailed recommendations to the United Nations Forum on Forests and to

a range of other relevant bodies, and in the Corobici Declaration. Both documents are available in English, French and Spanish.[1]

4. Although initially planned as a process of review and monitoring, it became clear in the course of the Expert Meeting that indigenous peoples' representatives from throughout the world had clear recommendations and perspectives on the potential future form of any international arrangement on forests. The present paper summarizes those recommendations as a guide for the States participating in the United Nations Forum on Forests in their deliberations on the future arrangement(s) on forests.

II. Indigenous assessment of the implementation of relevant proposals for action

5. In the IPF/IFF proposals for action, there are three key areas that are of central relevance to indigenous peoples: (a) those related to traditional forest-related knowledge; (b) those related to land and resource rights of indigenous peoples; and (c) those related to participation of indigenous and other forest dependent peoples in national legislation and forest plans. These proposals for action total some 21 proposals directly relevant to traditional forest-related knowledge; a further 7 regarding the importance of full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and other forest dependent peoples; and 9 regarding land and resource rights.

6. The proposals for action represent the interests of a wide range of actors in forest policy, inclusive of State interests, business and industry, the scientific community and others. The proposals of key interest to indigenous peoples call for, among other things:

- Mechanisms that provide opportunities for the participation of indigenous people in the design of national forest programmes and policies;
- Respect for the customary and traditional rights of "indigenous people and local communities" and secure land tenure arrangements;
- Recognition of the important role of the traditional forest-related knowledge of indigenous people;
- Implementation of article 8 (j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- Recognition and support for traditional resource use systems incorporating traditional forest-related knowledge, including new instruments and mechanisms to enhance the security of forest-dependent groups;
- Social mapping techniques in collaboration with indigenous people to assist in forest management planning;
- Participatory research with indigenous people to develop resource management approaches to reduce pressure on forests;
- Mechanisms to involve indigenous people in the regeneration and restoration of degraded forests and in their protection and management;
- Actions to ensure that trade policies take into account community rights;

- Steps to ensure equal opportunities for women, in particular indigenous women and women in rural areas, to benefit from forestry operations;

- National policies to address the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation.[2]

7. Thus the proposals for action represent an important call for increased recognition of indigenous peoples and involvement of indigenous peoples in the formulation of the forest strategies and policies which impact directly on their lives. However, it is of great concern to indigenous peoples that the implementation of these important aspects of the proposals for action has lagged behind practice in other forums. The focus on involvement of indigenous peoples in the United Nations Forum on Forests itself has remained at the national level and has been dominated by a view of indigenous peoples as one of many stakeholder groups, rather than as rights holders and owners of the forest biodiversity being discussed.

8. The review and evaluation of the implementation of proposals for action relevant to indigenous peoples on a national and regional level that is presented here was conducted through a range of case studies, and supplemented by analysis and discussion during the Expert Meeting. The case studies consist of three regional reports (Americas, Eurasia/Pacific and Africa) and 12 different country case studies, namely, for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, Kenya, Nepal, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Rwanda, the Russian Federation, Thailand and Venezuela. The main aims of the case studies were:

(a) To examine progress in implementation of international commitments at the national and local levels. These include the relevant proposals for action agreed through the IPF/IFF and United Nations Forum on Forests processes; commitments agreed under the Convention on Biological Diversity, including articles 8 (j) and 10 (c); the programme of work on protected areas; the programme of work on article 8 (j) and related provisions; and the expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity (Conference of the Parties decision VI/22);

(b) To establish clear examples of the challenges faced by Governments, indigenous peoples, local communities and international forest-related agencies in different contexts;

(c) To identify specific successes and best practice cases.

9. This approach was taken to ensure that the work of the United Nations Forum on Forests is not considered in isolation, but rather, in partnership with other existing international mechanisms and processes with similar objectives, and to ensure that best practice in one forum could be replicated in others.

10. Assessment of the efficacy of the implementation of existing proposals for action relevant to indigenous peoples is complex, owing to the global spread of indigenous peoples' communities, territories and resources. The case studies reflect this diversity and we would encourage Governments to access the full case study documents.[3] Here we will be presenting only the general overview as revealed in the case studies and regional overviews, combined with opinions and experience shared by participants in the Expert Meeting. There are four key areas of government commitments, as follows:

- Reporting and establishment of national forest plans/national forest action programmes and national biodiversity strategy and action plans

- Land and resource rights and recognition of traditional forest-related knowledge
- Documentation of traditional forest-related knowledge, benefit sharing and free prior and informed consent
- Indigenous participation in policy formulation and implementation.

Reporting and establishment of national forest plans/national forest action programmes and national biodiversity strategy and action plans

11. Reporting to the United Nations Forum on Forests was generally weak, with slightly stronger reporting into the Convention on Biological Diversity. It was particularly notable that in the majority of countries there was a lack of civil society participation in the writing of such reports, and the quality of reporting varied widely between countries.[4] In reports that were submitted, there was some treatment of traditional forest-related knowledge. However, in general, the quality and infrequency of reporting from some countries underlines the need to improve mechanisms to monitor implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals on traditional forest-related knowledge.

12. With regard to the establishment of the required broad policy frameworks, the majority of countries covered in the case studies have produced national biodiversity strategy and action plans and national forest action programmes/ national forest plans, which provide major frameworks for implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the IPF/IFF proposals for action, respectively. The guidelines for national forest plans include recognition and respect for customary and traditional rights of, inter alia, indigenous people, local communities, forest dwellers and forest owners. Actual recognition and respect is less apparent, however, and distinct regional differences emerge between the continents covered in the regional overview studies.

Land and resource rights and recognition of traditional forest-related knowledge

13. A prior requirement for the recognition of land and resource rights, and of traditional forest-related knowledge, is the recognition of the existence of indigenous peoples. Levels of recognition accorded by Governments vary sharply around the globe and within regions. The issues of recognition of indigenous peoples, and the attendant recognition of land and resource rights, and of traditional forest-related knowledge will be dealt with regionally below.

14. In Central Africa, none of the national case study countries and only Cameroon, among the eight countries highlighted in the regional study, recognizes the existence of indigenous peoples, with others referring to "local communities" or "traditional communities". Within this view of local and traditional communities, there is recognition of traditional knowledge as having relevance in forested lands, but "less as a reason for handing over forest management to those who possess that knowledge, than as a useful commodity for forest and biodiversity planners to use in implementation of their policies and programmes."[5] It is viewed as a potential commodity and as a useful tool in sustainable forest management, which is able to be accessed and dealt with separately from the issue of the rights of knowledge holders. None of the three African countries featured in the national case studies has taken legal measures specifically to protect indigenous land and resource rights, nor

attendant traditional knowledge. Rwanda's land legislation was recently revised, but without any specific measures to address the landlessness of the Batwa. Batwa, in particular, are disenfranchised and discriminated against; neither State law nor customary law of the dominant farming society recognizes their right to lands. In Rwanda, it has been politically dangerous for the Batwa to assert their indigenous identity and rights.

15. Positive developments in Africa indicating movement towards recognition of land tenure and traditional forest-related knowledge include the Ugandan land legislation of 1998, which recognizes collective rights over customary lands[6] and the commitment in Cameroon's Indigenous Peoples Development Plan — the first of its kind in Africa — to ensure legal recognition for all indigenous communities. In addition, new forest laws in Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Gabon give some rights to "local communities" to manage areas as community forests.

16. In the three Latin American cases studied, there is recognition of the existence of indigenous peoples as peoples with distinctive rights and roles in society. Panama, Peru and Venezuela have all given legal recognition to indigenous peoples and have also ratified to International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169. There are also specific legal and policy measures in each country giving land and resource rights to indigenous peoples, and in all three countries there is at least partial recognition of traditional forest-related knowledge in the broad sense. However, land and resource rights, as well as recognition of autonomy and traditional institutions, vary in their scope and degree of security. In Panama, 20 per cent of the national area is demarcated as indigenous Comarcas, although these do not confer autonomy and are still subject to government authorization for commercial exploitation. Similarly, in Peru, there are restrictions on autonomy and use of forests in both titled native communities and communal reserves. Moreover, in both Panama and Peru, titling of indigenous lands involves the creation of new structures of authority, which may undermine the traditional authorities. The situation in Venezuela has changed radically under the Government of Hugo Chavez; indigenous peoples and their rights to ancestral lands are now recognized in law, and demarcation of indigenous areas is currently being undertaken jointly by government and indigenous organizations.

17. In practice, conflicts with other forms of land use continue to undermine indigenous rights in Latin America. This is most acute in Peru, where a major policy initiative for commercial exploitation of forests is driving the privatization of over 24 million hectares of Amazonian forests through the public auctioning of large (over 50,000 ha) concessions. Areas were allocated for concessions without reference to accurate maps of existing native communities and proposed communal reserves and there are many overlaps with indigenous lands.

18. In the Asia-Pacific case studies, only the Philippines and Papua New Guinea fully recognize indigenous peoples and their rights. Nepal does recognize some ethnic groups as indigenous, but does not recognize rights on this basis. The national and regional case studies from Asia emphasize that customary systems of land tenure and forest management have largely been displaced by colonial expansion and more recent forest and land policies, and in many countries this has still not been rectified. The regional Asia case study documents demands by indigenous peoples for recognition of customary systems. For example, in

Indonesia, indigenous organizations have called for equal status for customary (adat) and State law within traditional areas. Adat is upheld in Malaysian law, but often not respected in practice.

19. The case study countries in South Asia (India Nepal, Thailand) have no specific measures on indigenous land tenure, although in India, there are "Scheduled Areas" for some tribal peoples and India's draft national biodiversity strategy and action plan includes measures on land tenure of forest-dependent communities and the rights of tribals. Nepal's report to the third session of the United Nations Forum on Forests states that usufruct rights for basic livelihoods are recognized for forest users; however, usufruct rights are often not recognized for landless forest peoples and seasonal and remote users, or are overridden by displacement by urbanization. In all three countries, there has been widespread displacement and eviction of indigenous peoples — still continuing in Nepal and Thailand — from areas designated for forest production or as protected areas. In the Philippines, the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (1997) specifies: communal rights (but not co-ownership) to ancestral lands and domains; rights to self-governance, empowerment, social justice and cultural integrity; the application of customary laws and practices; protection of indigenous culture, traditions and institutions; rights to indigenous knowledge systems and practices; and the right of indigenous peoples to develop their own sciences and technologies. However, there are contradictions between these provisions and the land and forestry laws.

20. With regard to the recognition of traditional forest-related knowledge, the regional Asia case study demonstrates that such recognition concentrates on a narrow definition that can be harnessed to goals of bioprospecting and commercial exploitation. This is particularly clear for India and Thailand, which recognize traditional forest-related knowledge but not indigenous peoples. Overall, traditional forest-related knowledge in forest management is not recognized on an equal footing with "scientific" forest knowledge.

21. In Papua New Guinea, customary land tenure is recognized by the Forestry Act and treated as part of the national legal framework, enforceable by the law courts. The Government recognizes that an impressive 97 per cent of the national territory is owned by local landowners according to customary law. Specifically, the Forestry Act (1991) recognizes customary landowner rights to ownership of land and forest produce and rights to use of the land. It also recognizes the need for prior informed consent for development (although enforcement in some areas has been poor).

22. The Russian Federation also recognizes indigenous peoples, but rights are largely conditional on maintenance of traditional lifestyles. Indigenous peoples who maintain traditional lifestyles can gain land and resource rights through the creation of territories for traditional use of nature. Such territories are protected areas where indigenous peoples have legal rights to ownership and maintenance of traditional use of land, rights to common mineral resources and priority for use of wildlife. However, rights are conditional on traditional practices. "Traditional use of nature" is defined as "historically developed methods of traditional use of nature based on a long-term balanced use of renewable natural resources ensuring natural resource reproduction and conservation of biological diversity", and thus territories for traditional use of nature implicitly recognize the value of traditional forest-related knowledge systems as forest management systems. Again, however, the legal framework for territories for traditional use of nature is contradictory and none has

yet been created. More widely, the fundamentals of forest ownership are not clear. Any new forest owner has the right to restrict or forbid indigenous peoples from using resources in their area. An interim report to the Convention on Biological Diversity on the Russia Federation's forest biodiversity emphasized the crucial role of traditional forest-related knowledge in forest protection by indigenous peoples, but recognized that no special measures existed to protect such knowledge.

23. In the case studies and in discussions during the Expert Meeting, attention focused on identifying the major obstacles and constraints to improved implementation of the proposals for action of relevance to indigenous peoples. The conclusions are that for the proposals for action related to rights to land and resources, the key obstacles are:

- Lack of recognition of indigenous peoples, inadequate land and resource rights on national level;
- Land conflicts with protected areas, land conflicts with logging and production forests;
- Centralized forest policies that are driven by production.

24. Obstacles to recognition of customary systems of tenure and traditional authorities include a lack of recognition of traditional forest-related knowledge systems, including customary tenure and authorities and a weakening of traditional institutional structures through the imposition of new structures.

Documentation of traditional forest-related knowledge, benefit sharing and free prior and informed consent

25. Of the three Latin American case study countries, only Peru has developed specific laws on documentation of traditional forest-related knowledge. However, both the Regime for the protection of collective indigenous knowledge related to biological resources (Law 27811, 2002) and the Law for the protection of access to Peruvian biological diversity and collective indigenous knowledge (Law 28216, 2004) put a much stronger emphasis on commercial aspects, such as granting of patents and licences, than on protection of the rights of knowledge-holders. Moreover, legal protection only applies to knowledge registered in a confidential national register, to which indigenous organizations would have no access. There is concern that the Government of Peru does not have the capacity to guarantee the security of this information and there have already been several cases of biopiracy in Peru which the Government has done little to address. In the case study, Roberto Espinoza suggests that a more appropriate strategy would be first to halt biopiracy, and then to develop a sui generis regime based on the principles of interculturality, sustainability and social equity.

26. In the Africa region, the development of the African Model Legislation for the Protection of the Rights of Local Communities, Farmers and Breeders, and for the Regulation of Access to Biological Resources (2000) is a significant step. However practical legal and policy measures on the protection of traditional forest-related knowledge and indigenous peoples' rights to their intellectual property are limited in much of Central Africa. There are some promising non-governmental initiatives for participatory documentation of traditional forest-related knowledge which have emerged in Central Africa recently. The only national biodiversity strategy and action plan to uphold the principle of prior informed consent is that of the Central

African Republic. African regional initiatives include the New Partnership for Africa's Development[7] and the Africa Forest Law Enforcement and Governance process, which is committed to take measures to ensure that property and usufruct rights, including traditional forest-related knowledge, are fully respected.

27. For the Asian region, "the general trend in Asia is towards the commercialization of genetic resources and the expansion of intellectual property rights over traditional knowledge". Relevant laws are listed from 19 different countries in the full study, available on request.[8] Documentation of traditional forest-related knowledge in electronic form is growing at both the national and regional levels.

Indigenous participation in policy formulation and implementation

28. The level and efficacy of indigenous participation in policy formulation and implementation is generally reported to be poor. Factors contributing to this include: the lack of effective mechanisms for participation and access to policy forums; lack of awareness of international commitments, both among indigenous peoples (except for a minority who work in leading indigenous organizations) and among government officials; and lack of organizational capacity and initiative of indigenous peoples. Where indigenous individuals do participate in international forums, there are often issues concerning their mandate and representatives of the indigenous population of their country. Directly relevant to the proposals for action concerning participation of indigenous peoples in policy formulation and implementation are the lack of mechanisms for participation on the national level, lack of information provision both to government officials and to indigenous communities about existing commitments, lack of organizational capacity on behalf of responsible government agencies, and in some countries obstructive or insensitive government policies.

29. Other factors which act as obstacles to better implementation of the proposals for action include, for many countries in Asia and Africa, financial constraints, gaps between the national policies and the real practice, lack of awareness among responsible government officials, lack of harmonization between different laws and insurgency or civil unrest.

III. Gaps in the existing proposals for action

30. The existing proposals for action as produced in the IPF/IFF process are comprehensive and detailed, and represent an impressive consensus on appropriate ways to coordinate globally forest policy on national levels. From the perspective of indigenous peoples, however, there are some serious gaps in the proposals for action, which are of significant concern. In particular, it is acknowledged by many in the international community that access to resources and control over the management of resources are preconditions to the enjoyment of basic human rights, the right to subsistence, the right to food security and many others. However, the existing proposals for action lack reference to or compliance with the key human rights instruments in the international system. Given the centrality of land and resource tenure to the continuation of indigenous peoples' cultures, traditions and lives, the lack of specific reference to human rights in any discussion of a

framework for managing the resources on which indigenous peoples depend is worrying.

31. Related to this is the lack of clear discussion about relocation of communities and peoples from forested areas — an act we consider to be in gross violation of human rights and indigenous rights if not carried out under the principle of free prior informed consent. Indeed, free prior informed consent is not supported or mentioned in the proposals for action in relation to land or resource ownership and access, although it is a principle that indigenous peoples have consistently called for and is recognized under ILO Convention No. 169 and included in recommendation 23 of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on indigenous peoples (1997). The principle of free prior and informed consent is referenced in regard to the use of traditional forest-related knowledge but not in regard to management policies over resources or authority over traditional lands.

32. Finally, there seems to be a lack of consensus among Governments on traditional forest-related knowledge. This can be clearly illustrated by the fourth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests. Governments' polarized positions on this topic highlighted the fact that the development of an effective and participatory international arrangement on forests will require that Governments be informed and flexible, and that without the genuine participation of civil society groups with an understanding of and interest in the issues at stake, deliberations may simply break down and important topics left unaddressed, owing to their difficult nature. In addition, the difficulties surrounding the discussions of access to and use of traditional knowledge at the fourth session of the Forum, highlighted the problems in addressing this topic at the international level.[9]

IV. Priority areas for action

33. In the recommendations that emerged from the Expert Meeting on Traditional Forest-Related Knowledge and the Implementation of Related International Commitments, there were a number of very strong thematic recommendations which tie directly into the proposals for action already before the United Nations Forum on Forests and collaborating States. One of the areas in which the proposals for action are strongest from the perspective of indigenous peoples is the numerous times in which countries are encouraged to support and promote the participation of indigenous peoples in national level processes of forest management and forest policy development. Indicative of these is the following where the IPF:

> "Encouraged countries to elaborate systems, including private and community forest management systems, for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating national forest programmes that identify and involve, where appropriate, a broad participation of indigenous people, forest dwellers, forest owners and local communities in meaningful decision-making regarding the management of State forest lands in their proximity, within the context of national laws and legislation".[10]

34. However, the involvement of indigenous peoples at the national level was also identified by the Expert Meeting participants as the most serious weakness of current approaches to sustainable management of forested lands. In the full Corobici recommendations, the following statement was provided to national Governments to

address the lack of space for real participation — the exact participation that the proposals for action call for:

> Recognizing that the protection and promotion of the traditional forest-related knowledge of indigenous peoples is inextricably linked with their full cultural and intellectual heritage, secure rights to their lands, territories and the natural resources therein and with their spirituality and customary law,
>
> Considering that indigenous peoples' rights are the foundation of their future development, and that many indigenous peoples traditionally and currently depend on forests, and that indigenous peoples' rights must be recognized in forest policies,
>
> Asserting that sustainable forest management cannot be achieved without the protection of indigenous peoples' rights,
>
> We provide the following recommendations:
>
> National Governments and States should, with full and effective participation of indigenous peoples:
>
> 1. Undertake constitutional reforms that recognize the existence and identities of indigenous peoples in their countries, through plural legal regimes and by ensuring their prominence in national law;
>
> 2. Ratify International Labour Convention No. 169 on the Rights of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, where indigenous peoples so demand;
>
> 3. Support the adoption of the United Nations draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples;
>
> 4. Review national constitutions, laws and policies to harmonize them with applicable international laws and agreements concerning the rights of indigenous peoples;
>
> 5. Repeal exclusionary forest and conservation laws, policies and associated norms, codes and legislation that criminalize the customary resource use practices and traditional livelihood activities;
>
> 6. Reform national forest and conservation policies, laws, institutions and land tenure regimes to recognize indigenous peoples' unambiguous and secure rights to collectively own, manage, and control their territories, forests and other natural resources, taking into account their traditional lifestyles and customary systems of tenure, especially those relevant to traditional knowledge;
>
> 7. Repeal all assimilationist development laws and policies, since they devalue and undermine indigenous knowledge, including traditional forest-related knowledge;
>
> 8. Adopt laws and programmes that eliminate and penalize all forms of discrimination, intolerance and social exclusion, and ratify and implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination;

35. In addition, clear recommendations were provided concerning positive action to ensure strong future participation:

> 39. At the national level, Governments should address indigenous peoples' issues within their national forest programmes and national biodiversity action plans, and parks and protected areas strategies, and strengthen indigenous peoples' participation in national planning, implementation and reporting. In addition, consultation should be done with respect to appropriate indigenous peoples' structures, with mechanisms for documentation and disclosure.
>
> 49. Any international arrangement on forests should adopt the best practices of other United Nations bodies (such as Convention on Biological Diversity in its work on article 8 (j)/WGIP/UNPFII) concerning the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples. Any international arrangement on forests should adopt such mechanisms of participation.
>
> 50. The United Nations Forum on Forests, and any subsequent international arrangement on forests, should recognize indigenous peoples as distinct peoples and grant them increased and differentiated participation consistent with emerging trends in the United Nations system.

36. On a national level, the proposals for action also echo the calls of indigenous peoples for recognition of secure land tenure arrangements. Indigenous peoples have called consistently in all international forums and at the national level for recognition of their rights to traditional lands and territories. In the words of Gilberto Arias, First Kuna Cacique:

> "The forest is our life and our existence. In the forest we find our food, our medicines, our housing and our knowledge. How can they think that we, the indigenous people, could destroy our life, destroying forests? We have used the forests for a truly sustainable development, only taking what we needed."

37. The proposals for action produced go some way towards answering this call, as illustrated in the following proposals for action:

> "Encouraged countries, in accordance with their national sovereignty ... to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate national forest programmes, which include a wide range of approaches for sustainable forest management, taking into consideration the following: ... recognition and respect for customary and traditional rights of, inter alia, indigenous people and local communities; **secure land tenure arrangements**; holistic intersectoral and iterative approaches; ecosystem approaches that integrate the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of biological resources" (emphasis added)[11]
>
> "Invited countries ... to use national forest programmes ... to involve indigenous and local communities and women to participate in the formulation

and implementation of measures that aim to protect their rights and privileges in relation to forest lands, traditional forest-related knowledge and forest biological resources" (as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity)[12]

"Encouraged countries, within their respective legal frameworks ... to support land tenure policies that recognize and respect legitimate access and use, and property rights in order to support sustainable forest management and investment, recognizing that institutionalizing tenure is a long-term and complex process which requires interim measures to address urgent needs, in particular of local and/or indigenous communities".[13]

38. However, the proposals for action do not draw the link between land tenure and resource security on the one hand, and the realization of basic human rights to subsistence and to livelihoods on the other. The establishment of secure and just land tenure is a matter of human rights, and as such is a commitment that all Governments have as signatories to the key international human rights instruments. Such instruments and the rights that they detail and protect elaborate commitments on the side of Governments to align national legislation with these "higher order" commitments to protect basic human rights. As such, national legislation must be brought into line with the requirements of human rights treaties, rather than land tenure arrangements being established without reference to such commitments. This silence on the issue of human rights and the basic needs of indigenous peoples and local communities is a constant throughout the proposals for action, a serious gap considering the fact that these proposals deal with the means of subsistence and livelihoods of hundreds of peoples, and millions of communities.

39. In addition to the national level involvement of indigenous peoples in the management of their territories and resources, there also exist priority areas for action within the working methods of the United Nations Forum on Forests itself. We would like to draw attention specifically to the need to align the work of the various agencies working on issues of traditional forest-related knowledge, inter-agency collaboration of the sort called for within the proposals for action from both IPF and IFF exist:

"Invited countries and relevant international organizations, especially the Conference of the Parties to the Convention [on Biological Diversity], to collaborate with indigenous people and forest dependent people who possess traditional forest-related knowledge ... to identify, respect, preserve and maintain traditional forest-related knowledge, including innovations and practices that are relevant for the conservation of forest biological diversity and the sustainable use of forest biological resources"[14]

"Invited the World Intellectual Property Organization, together with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development ... to develop ways and means to promote effective protection of traditional forest-related knowledge, in particular against illegal international trafficking, and also to promote the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from such knowledge"[15]

"Invited the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, with the participation of indigenous people and local communities, through the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intersessional Working Group, in its programme of work ... to include options for collecting, recording, applying and locating traditional forest-related knowledge, recognizing the need to

foster the wider application of such knowledge, innovations and practices, with approval and effective involvement of the holders throughout the process".[16]

40. These are not the only proposals for action calling for such collaboration, but they are illustrative of the commitment of the United Nations Forum on Forests to such an inter-agency approach. Indigenous peoples in the Expert Meeting reiterated this need, calling specifically for:

> 41. The Convention on Biological Diversity, and any future international arrangement on forests, must increase and accelerate work on mainstreaming indigenous peoples' issues, as cross-cutting issues, across all of the thematic and other areas of the Convention.
>
> 42. The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues should provide greater coordination and guidance and make recommendations to the United Nations Forum on Forests, governing bodies of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests member organizations, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, in their work relevant to indigenous peoples.
>
> 43. The Permanent Forum should create a task force on traditional knowledge, bringing together all the United Nations agencies working on traditional knowledge to ensure a broad and effective holistic approach to the protection of traditional knowledge and related natural resources.
>
> 44. Now that it exists with a mandate relevant to the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Permanent Forum should become a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.

41. The availability of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to provide the collaborative approach required to ensure there is no duplication and that work progressing in one forum is advanced and adopted in others should be recognized by the United Nations Forum on Forests.

42. With regard to intellectual property rights and the protection of traditional forest-related knowledge through sui generis systems of knowledge access and use, the proposals for action recognize such sui generis systems in the IFF proposal for action which:

> "Called upon countries to implement effective measures to recognize, respect, protect and maintain traditional forest-related knowledge in sustainable forest management, including forest biological resources (as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity) within their intellectual property rights, sui generis or other relevant systems for protection, as appropriate, taking into account the relevant work being advanced by the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant international agreements".[17]

43. Initiatives exist in which indigenous peoples are researching and developing possible structures and forms for such sui generis systems and full support should be

provided to these initiatives by the United Nations Forum on Forests. This support could take a variety of forms, as stated in the following Corobici recommendations:

> 31. Take adequate measures to help preserve and protect the traditional forest-related knowledge of indigenous peoples, with the free, prior and informed consent of the indigenous peoples concerned.
>
> 32. Liaise with indigenous peoples to establish a process for the documentation of traditional forest-related knowledge with the free prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples.
>
> 33. Recognize that the knowledge so documented continues to be the property of the indigenous peoples in question, and that it cannot be used in any manner without their free prior informed consent, through the establishment, in a fully participatory manner, of appropriate laws and policies.
>
> 34. Ensure that indigenous peoples receive the benefits from any use of this knowledge, through the establishment, in a fully participatory manner, of appropriate laws and policies.
>
> 35. All international processes dealing with forest issues (including the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Convention on Biological Diversity), as well as all international forest-related agencies (including members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests) should apply an integrated and rights-based approach in all policy discussions, initiatives, projects or programmes that directly or indirectly deal with or relate to traditional knowledge.
>
> 36. Ensure that agro-forestry technologies drawing upon traditional forest-related knowledge, such as "Taungya", clearly acknowledge the origins of this knowledge and only apply it with the free, prior and informed consent of its original custodians.[18]

44. With regard to capacity-building, a recommendation emphasized in the African and Asian regional discussions, the proposal for action already part of the Government consensus states that the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests:

> "Urged countries to work with communities and build on their knowledge to establish stronger linkages between traditional and emerging national sustainable forest management systems".[19]

45. Yet this was one of the key weaknesses highlighted in the discussions in the Expert Meeting and must be considered a priority area of activity in the future. It can be achieved by taking into consideration the education-related recommendations of the Expert Meeting which state:

9. Develop primary and secondary school curricula to reflect the perspectives of, and be relevant to, indigenous systems of knowledge.

10. Implement affirmative action regarding the provision of education to indigenous girls and boys, such as free education.

11. Provide the required technical services and political and moral support necessary for the recognition, creation, and functioning of future indigenous universities, where indigenous peoples so demand.

12. Ensure that in schools and universities where forestry and related studies are taught current curricula for courses and degrees are expanded to include both traditional forest-related knowledge and the rights of indigenous peoples.

13. Initiate deliberate action to provide indigenous women with the necessary capacity to participate fully in all strategies of natural resource management, and to share their knowledge of traditional natural resource management practices.[18]

V. Indigenous priorities for any future arrangement(s) on forests

46. The priority areas for action outlined above are, from the perspective of the Expert Meeting, essential components of any future arrangement on forests. Recognition of land tenure, recognition of traditional forest related knowledge and the rights of knowledge holders, support of sui generis systems to protect such knowledge, capacity-building of indigenous communities and of government officials and effective coordination between international agencies working on the same issues are required for any future arrangement on forests which is to have the voluntary participation and support of the world's indigenous peoples. In addition to these priority areas, there are also a number of key foundational principles which we see as being essential in a future arrangement on forests, if it is to have full and effective participation by indigenous peoples.

47. The first is that any future arrangement on forests must recognize the unique role of indigenous peoples, as distinct from other sectors of civil society, as rights holders rather than stakeholders. This entails ensuring that international best practice on ensuring the participation of indigenous peoples as direct participants in negotiations rather than simply partners in implementation is incorporated into the rules of procedure and structures of any arrangement.

48. Closely tied with this is the prerequisite that any international arrangement on forests should recognize that it is bound by the international human rights instruments to which all States are parties. This means that the basic rights outlined in the three key human rights documents, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Social, Cultural and Economic Rights, must be the foundation for all and any work in an international arrangement on forests. For indigenous peoples, rights to subsistence, rights to food security and rights to livelihood are all intimately bound to the resources on which they depend, and thus

forest resources and management of them must, for indigenous peoples, be consistent with basic human rights standards.

49. With regard to more specific recommendations for any future arrangement on forests, there are problems with the current structure which should be addressed in any new structure or arrangement(s). The existing international arrangement on forests contains within it a clear marginalization of the only global body that is placed to monitor the impact of international agreements on indigenous peoples — the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. This body has been mandated by the General Assembly to coordinate across United Nations bodies work relevant to and impacting on the lives and cultures of indigenous peoples. Nothing is more central for indigenous peoples than access to resources, territories and land. Yet the international arrangement on forests as it stands at the moment provides the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues with only membership of a wider "Collaborative Partnership on Forests network", a body intended to promote major group participation.

50. In order for indigenous peoples' priorities and concerns to be met in ways appropriate to the serious nature of these concerns and the centrality of these concerns to the continuing existence of indigenous peoples, it is necessary for representative bodies of indigenous peoples to be involved in these decision-making, standard-setting and implementing activities. The Collaborative Partnership on Forests is mandated to assist the United Nations Forum on Forests in promoting implementation of the proposals for action, to strengthen political commitment, enhance cooperation and coordination among its members, facilitate the implementation of proposals for action specific to each member's area of expertise and to assist in monitoring and reporting on progress in implementing them. Proposals for action of most relevance to indigenous peoples — those regarding traditional forest-related knowledge — are mandated to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and those concerning the social and cultural aspects of forests, to the World Bank, with other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests being asked to provide support. While recognizing the progress made under the Convention, the wider mandating of these proposals for action to agencies with no representation of the peoples most directly impacted is a serious flaw in the current arrangement. A future arrangement or arrangements on forests should closely involve the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to enable it to fulfil its role as a coordinating body for United Nations work involving or impacting on indigenous peoples.

VI. Recommendations on achievable goals and targets

51. The key achievable goals and targets which should be incorporated into any future arrangement(s) on forests are:

- The United Nations Forum on Forests should recommend and support the establishment of a task force on traditional knowledge under the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues bringing together all the United Nations agencies working on traditional knowledge to ensure a broad and effective holistic approach to the protection of traditional knowledge and related natural resources.

- Full and effective participation of indigenous peoples, according to best practice, at all levels. On an international level the best practice case of the Convention on Biological Diversity process should be held as a goal in the participation of indigenous peoples. At the regional level, all and any forest policy formulation should have participation by regional, indigenous peoples' networks and organizations.

- The United Nations Forum on Forests should provide support for the self-development of sui generis systems for the protection and appropriate use and sharing of indigenous and traditional knowledge.

- Any future international arrangement(s) on forests should focus on monitoring, assessment and reporting on implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action. Such monitoring and assessment systems should provide the financial resources for third-party assessments and peer reviews and independent evaluations of these processes should be emphasized.

    - The United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat should redraft guidelines for national reporting to ensure that it embraces a broader set of issues relevant to indigenous issues and traditional forest-related knowledge.

    - The Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Forum on Forests and their member States should strengthen national reports by including, in an equitable way, the perspectives of indigenous peoples, and by providing equitable funding and resources for indigenous peoples to submit parallel reports to complement and enrich the national reporting process to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Forum on Forests.

    - National reports to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Forum on Forests should identify who (in terms of indigenous peoples) has been consulted through what indigenous peoples' structures or organizations and indigenous peoples' communities should be aware of the process and structures to allow them to participate and contribute.

- Sufficient financial resources should be allocated to indigenous peoples' issues and priorities within the United Nations Forum on Forests system through the establishment of a specific standing agenda item addressing indigenous peoples' forest issues. In addition, indigenous peoples' forest issues should be addressed as cross-cutting issues throughout the United Nations Forum on Forests. The programme of work of any future arrangement should take into account the relevance of indigenous perspectives in all aspects of work.

VII. Conclusions and recommendations

52. **There have been impressive gains in the past displaying an increasingly concrete acceptance of the social, cultural and sustainability aspects of forests, and this should be applauded. The key recommendations that emerged from the Expert Meeting on Traditional Forest-Related Knowledge and the Implementation of related international agreements are detailed above. The key recommendations that the present paper would like to emphasize for discussions during the fifth session are:**

- **Participation on a national level in the formulation and implementation of national forest policies is essential.**
- **Secure land tenure and resource rights frameworks must be developed to ensure that the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands and territories are respected.**
- **Inter-agency cooperation and collaboration is essential to ensure that best practices are shared, and the involvement of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is essential to ensuring that cross-sectoral work on issues involving or impacting on indigenous peoples is coordinated.**
- **Inter-agency support should be provided to the creation of sui generis systems of knowledge protection, to ensure that work is not duplicated.**

53. **Finally the participation of indigenous peoples in any international arrangement(s) on forests is essential to the sustainable management of the forest resources being discussed. Examples exist in the international arena of the mechanisms that can be adopted to allow indigenous peoples such participation and these should be adopted and strengthened in the United Nations Forum on Forests process or any process or arrangement that replaces it**.

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Notes

[1] See www.international-alliance.org/tfrk_expert_meeting.htm.

[2] Briefing on the United Nations Forum on Forests and Collaborative Partnership on Forests, Forest Peoples Programme, December 2004.

[3] The full text of these documents is available at www.international-alliance.org/tfrk_expert_ meeting.htm.

[4] Forests and the European Union Resource Network (FERN) briefing paper for the fourth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, on file with the International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests (IAITPTF).

[5] Jackson, regional Central Africa study, p. 63.

[6] Ibid., p. 25, box 7.

[7] Ibid., sect. 2.1.5.

[8] Regional initiatives include the Intellectual Property Rights Expert Group of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation, the Association of South-East Asian Nations Framework Agreement on Access to Biological and Genetic Resources and Traditional Knowledge and the Guidelines and Model Law on Access to Genetic Resources in Pacific Island Countries.

[9] Briefing note on the fourth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests by the IAITPTF, FERN and the Forest People's Programme.

[10] Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) proposal for action, E/CN.17/1997/12, para. 17 (f). See also ibid., paras. 29 (a), 40 (e), 40 (g), 89 (h) and 115 (b), and Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) proposal for action, E/CN.17/2000/14, para. 8 (b).

[11] IPF proposal for action, E/CN.17/1997/12, para. 17 (a).

[12] IFF proposal for action, E/CN.17/2000/14, para. 66.

[13] Ibid., para. 115 (d).

[14] IPF proposal for action, E/CN.17/1997/12, para. 40 (b).

[15] Ibid., para. 40 (o).

[16] IFF proposal for action, E/CN.17/2000/14, para. 75.

[17] Ibid., para. 74 (a).

[18] Corobici Recommendations, report of the Expert Meeting on Traditional Forest-Related Knowledge and the implementation of related international commitments, IAITPTF. See www.international-alliance.org/tfrk_expert_meeting.htm.

[19] IPF proposal for action, E/CN.17/1997/12, para. 40 (i).

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Multi-stakeholder dialogue

Note by the Secretariat**

Addendum

Discussion paper contributed by the children and youth major group

Summary

The children and youth major group of the United Nations Forum on Forests has based this contribution on the principle of intergenerational justice, which demands that the decision makers of today face the responsibility to pass on a sound environment to future generations and allow the children of today to grow up free from poverty caused by the unsustainable use of forests. After a review of the decisions of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF)/the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests and the United Nations Forum on Forests (IFF), we came to the conclusion that the international community realized this responsibility, but that the implementation of decisions made has to be fortified.

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To facilitate this implementation, we focused on those decisions that make children stronger in society and support the role of youth as important recipients of knowledge about sustainable forest management. We fear that while forests become increasingly remote to urban youth, the linkages weaken and the recognition of forests as a natural part of the living environment diminishes. Access of young people to forests should be ensured and facilitated in order to avoid the loss of interest in and connection to nature. Overall recognition of the importance of forests to society, as well as the role of local communities in forest management, should be enhanced. The well-being of communities, fostered through ownership in forest management, directly influences that of the children and youth among them.

The present discussion paper demonstrates that children and young people can efficiently raise the awareness of social and environmental problems. Other development sectors are already using this entry point to catalyse changes within societies, and companies are investing most of their promotion budget in the young generation to enhance the image of their products. Official development assistance (ODA) related to sustainable forest management is just a minimal percentage.

The children and youth major group was able to incorporate many of its concerns into the outcomes of the third and fourth sessions of the Forum, and the recommendations make clear proposals on how to strengthen and to improve education to implement sustainable forest management at the local level. The children and youth major group hopes that the IPF/IFF proposals for action, as well as the recommendations developed during the Forum process, will be transformed from a dialogue to real, inclusive stakeholder action. In order to implement these proposals, effective partnerships among the Governments, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, donors and organizations of the children and youth major group must be established.

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I. Introduction

1. The present discussion paper serves as a platform to provide the United Nations Forum on Forests with a synthesis of the views of the children and youth major group pertaining to the achievements of the Forum and to the functions of the future International Arrangement on Forests. This paper also serves as a review of the role and potential of young people in the implementation of sustainable forest management and identifies challenges concerning more effective inclusion of youth in the implementation of sustainable forest management.

2. This contribution is the joint effort of the three designated focal points for the children and youth major group; the Global Youth Network, Initiatives jeunes and the International Forestry Students' Association. These groups have collaborated with numerous other international, regional and local youth organizations, including 4-H Finland, 4-H Norway and the World Organization of the Scout Movement, to ensure the strong voice of youth in the Forum process.

3. The information for this paper was collected through international and regional workshops and networks, as well as consultations on the local level. Some parts of this paper refer to the survey of students from 37 universities, carried out by the International Forestry Students' Association in cooperation with the International Partnership on Forestry Education. Other parts refer to a study conducted at the University of Fribourg on the influence of youth participation in the Forum.

II. Background

4. As background information, the potential of young people has been analysed in terms of the strengths and weaknesses of opportunities for and threats to youth as stakeholders in the implementation of sustainable forest management.

A. Strengths

5. Half the global population is under 25 years old. Young people often form the largest part of the population, especially in developing countries. Young people ensure the present and future availability of human resources in forest activities of all kinds. Progress towards sustainable development will only occur with the help and cooperation of younger generations.

6. Young people are often highly motivated to contribute to the development of society with fresh ideas and innovative approaches. Youth as a group can effectively contribute to the implementation of sustainable development, including sustainable forest management.

7. Managing forests means making long-term investments. What is now being planted or allowed to naturally regenerate will be harvested in 10 to 300 years' time. It is difficult for human beings to plan for these long time periods, especially in regions where financial resources are scarce and everyday income is crucial for survival. Ownership will guarantee that people will have an interest in the future outcomes of their actions. Young people have this interest naturally and instinctively, as they have to organize society for the decades to come. In short, youth bear the responsibility of ensuring that their future livelihoods are well maintained.

8. According to the survey carried out by the International Forestry Students' Association and the International Partnership on Forestry Education among forestry students, the scientific background for sustainable forest management in higher education is sufficiently taught in universities. Students feel prepared and can be an important resource to implement sustainable forest management at this early stage.

B. Weaknesses

9. The organization of youth groups at the international level has shown increasingly beneficial results. However, at the local level, and especially in developing countries, adequate platforms are lacking to allow young people to become organized. The lack of support from professionals and the lack of coordination among different initiatives and organizations often results in duplicate efforts.

10. Awareness of relevant issues is essential for the sustainable use of forests. Adequate information about forests, including their conservation and use, is often lacking in both the formal and informal pre-university education of young people. Gaps in education are leading to a serious distortion in the attitudes of young people. Urban youth are losing their contact with and interest in forests, which are regarded as remote, boring and even scary. Rural youth, although living closer to forests, often lack adequate teaching about their sustainable use. Indigenous knowledge and issues are rarely taught from the primary to higher education level, even in areas where indigenous populations live in the forests.

11. Forestry students feel technically prepared to implement sustainable forest management. However, sustainable forest management goes far beyond technical, scientific knowledge. Deforestation is heavily based on social problems, but the linkages between forests and society are poorly communicated through education, both in primary and higher forestry education.

12. Youth are often not recognized as important stakeholders in forestry. This low level of recognition means that the support given to youth initiatives on the local, regional and international levels is often poor. Youth have difficulties in finding financial support for their activities, and their initiatives are often ignored.

13. The representation of the children and youth major group in the Forum differs from all other major groups because the leading persons will eventually leave the group as they grow older. Due to the relatively rapid turnover of people actively involved in the process, continuity cannot always be guaranteed. Cooperation with youth — from participation to implementation — has to take this into consideration and methods have to be developed to overcome this problem.

C. Opportunities

14. Youth have proved their capacity to implement sustainable forest management with true impact. Investing in this capacity can result in remarkable improvements in the implementation of sustainable forest management.

15. Young people can contribute to the fight against deforestation and unsustainable use of forests if they have the adequate tools to do so.

16. Young people are usually more influential and open to bring about a change in the behaviour of their parents towards sustainable development. An ideological change in attitude towards forests, their use and conservation cannot necessarily be achieved among the older generation, but there is a high possibility for this change among children and youth.

17. Young people, as part of society, make use of forests and their products. Education on sustainable development will enable them to be responsible and environmentally aware consumers. The role of responsible consumer will come naturally to these young people in adulthood.

18. Young people are efficient messengers within their own generation and society in general. They foster the sharing of knowledge and the dissemination of information at all levels, from local to international. Raising awareness about social and environmental problems can be efficiently and effectively carried out through children and young people.

19. Supporting cross-sector approaches, such as linking the education of youth to sustainable development and sustainable forest management, are very promising in raising the profile of forests and are improving the effectiveness of development programmes. Other development sectors are already using this entry point to catalyse change within societies. Companies are investing most of their promotion budget in the young generation in order to enhance the image of their products. ODA related to sustainable forest management is just a minimal percentage.

D. Threats

20. Youth in rural areas face difficulties concerning employment, social recognition and access to education. The trend towards dividing forests into either production units or conservation areas often hinders access to the forest for both small-scale income-generation and educational and recreational purposes, thereby further weakening the living conditions of rural youth. Meanwhile, forests are becoming increasingly remote to urban youth, the linkages weaken and the recognition of forests as a natural part of the living environment diminishes.

21. Young people tend to be the most vulnerable and marginalized group with respect to unemployment, poverty, armed conflict and health problems, and they need more care from Governments than any other social group. The decrease in governmental support for the poor through social security systems directly affects youth and women as the most vulnerable sectors of society.

22. Decision makers tend to prioritize certain stakeholder groups over others. Issues pertaining to youth are often left off the political agenda because, in part, attention is given to groups with wider representation, stronger influence or higher political status.

23. Youth often face the situation in which the priority of concern is given to issues that need urgent action. Activities that have high economic importance, receive political recognition and produce fast results attract most of the attention, while youth-related activities play a more preventive role. Investments in youth activities often require an understanding of the future-orientated nature of younger generations. Investing in today's young people is a requirement for sustainable solutions in the future.

III. Review of progress and consideration of future action of the International Arrangement on Forests

A. Young people in relation to forests — challenges in the International Arrangement on Forests and its successor

24. The threats of deforestation and the degradation of forests, as well as the resulting negative changes in society, are affecting children in their quality of life today and imperil the right of future generations to live in a sound environment that can provide them with essential resources.

25. At the same time, young people offer opportunities for making long-term investments in sustainable forest management. If they are taken seriously as partners for implementation and if responsibilities, assistance and funds are shared, they will be the key pillars for the sustainable use of forest resources in the future.

26. The role of youth in sustainable development can be divided into three fields:

- Children as needy and passive parts of society, highly dependent on the social and economic resources of their parents' livelihoods
- Young people as an active part of society, motivated to contribute to the development of society with fresh ideas and innovative approaches, as disseminators of knowledge on sustainable development and as an important human resource for future implementation
- Young people as advocates of intergenerational justice and sustainability, which implies the right of younger generations to live in a sound environment that can provide them with essential resources

27. As youth has not been actively involved in the IPF/IFF process, their needs and concerns are very general and are only indirectly reflected in the IPF/IFF proposals for action. Nevertheless, many decisions treat children as needy, dependent and passive individuals when it comes to the social and economic aspects of forests. Furthermore, the concept of sustainable forest management captures the principle of intergenerational justice.

28. When the children and youth major group participated for the first time in the third session of the Forum, they provided substantive input to the process and made concrete suggestions for using the potential of youth to implement sustainable forest management.

B. Review of the multi-year programme of work

29. We believe that the Forum addressed the key challenges ahead to implement sustainable forest management by calling on Governments, international organizations, donors and major group organizations to promote its implementation. In reviewing the progress of the International Arrangement on Forests, the children and youth major group would like to focus on several topics related to the multi-year programme of work of the Forum that would need to be emphasized for the efficient implementation of sustainable forest management.

1. Social and cultural aspects of forests (Forum resolutions 3/1, paragraph 3, and 4/2, paragraphs 2 and 7)

30. As already stated in the children and youth major group discussion paper for the fourth session of the Forum, one of the principal concerns of forest-dependent communities today is the loss of control over the management of their forest resources. Timber cut in developing regions or in countries with large intact primary forests is often shipped away to be processed, often illegally, with very little employment generated for local communities. Furthermore, there is an emerging push to link local forest management with poverty alleviation efforts in developing countries as was also recognized by the parties at the fourth session of the Forum.

31. The strong ownership of and commitment to forest-dependent communities to sustainable forest management can help to overcome the social causes for deforestation. Communities living in balance with their environment can provide better living conditions for children.

32. Law enforcement and the importance of combating illegal trade was addressed at the third session of the Forum.

2. Economic aspects of forests (Forum resolution 3/1, paragraphs 1 and 10)

33. The linkages between the sustainable use of forests and youth as a part of society should be recognized and the relationship among poverty reduction, youth and forests should be emphasized. Income-generation from forest products, especially in those rural livelihoods that are dependent on forests, can be essential for the well-being of young people by enabling access to education and generating employment opportunities.

34. As also stated by the parties at the third session of the Forum, forests must have a priority in national development and poverty reduction strategies. Young people can be an excellent entry point to link national and local strategies for the sustainable use of forests and poverty reduction, and they can further support the processes with their implementation capacity.

35. The strong participation of civil society in national forest programme processes is useful in proving the capacity of such programmes as instruments to contribute to poverty alleviation and the development of rural communities. The existing supportive tools should be used more efficiently to facilitate the participation of stakeholders in the process. Stakeholder-driven initiatives aimed at widening participation in the processes should be recognized and supported by countries.

3. Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs (Forum resolution 3/3, paragraphs 10 and 13)

36. Intergenerational justice demands that the decision makers of today take responsibility for passing on a sound environment to future generations. They should take this commitment seriously, since the heritage of intact forest ecosystems is rapidly decreasing and immediate action is needed. Participants in the third session of the Forum agreed that capacity-building of younger generations is an important measure to save this heritage.

37. The maintenance of forest cover can be seen as a contribution to poverty reduction. To achieve this, a great deal of educational work has to be done among stakeholders. For example, in Latin America, the landless movements continuously promote the substitution of forests with agricultural plants. These communities must be supported to find ways to make a living within the sustainable use of natural resources. In most tropical areas, agroforestry systems are highly adapted to the local soil conditions and can offer a long-term, sustainable means of subsistence. Development projects should include these important stakeholders and their needs to effectively combat deforestation.

4. Traditional forest-related knowledge

38. The transfer of traditional forest-related knowledge from elders to youth is an important way to ensure that the intellectual heritage of forest-dependent communities is maintained. However, two disturbing trends have been observed. First, there is a continuing loss of traditional forest-related knowledge due to inadequate recognition and protection; thus there is continuing forest degradation and deforestation. Second, there is an alarming trend of intellectual appropriation by commercial entities without due and equitable compensation to the local knowledge holders. This trend, commonly termed "bio-piracy", threatens to rob the youth of today and future generations of the right to this knowledge.

39. The proposals for action of IPF/IFF provide broad recommendations for countries to advance the use of traditional forest-related knowledge for sustainable forest management, with the participation of indigenous and local people. Decision makers must ensure that co-management and other forms of participatory forest management provide the means for incorporating relevant traditional forest-related knowledge into forest management plans and practices, with the involvement of local communities. Research on and extension of in situ and ex situ traditional forest management approaches, or those that integrate scientific forestry and traditional forest-related knowledge, must be promoted.

5. The potential of young people for the implementation of sustainable forest management (Forum resolution 3/3, seventh preambular paragraph, subparagraph (j))

40. The important role of education was highlighted at the third and fourth sessions of the Forum. The children and youth major group could raise the awareness of the parties about the potential of young people to contribute to the implementation of sustainable forest management.

41. To further implement education on sustainable forest management, the decisions of the fourth session of the Forum contain concrete proposals on education and capacity-building in primary schools, developing countries, higher forestry education and youth's role in scientific research, as will be demonstrated below.

6. The role of primary education

42. The implementation of sustainable management of forest resources is a long-term investment and requires support, especially from younger generations, in order to be sustainable. Primary education is the key to raising awareness among children about the necessity of the sustainable use of forests and to providing basic knowledge of forest ecosystems. The fourth session of the Forum recognized this

need clearly and requested the inclusion of forest conservation in curricula from primary to higher education.

43. Primary-level education on forests has multiple effects on the development of young people as responsible citizens. An understanding of nature helps children learn the overall functions of society and teaches them to behave responsibly in society.

7. Education and capacity-building in developing countries

44. The capacity-building and training issue especially reflects the needs of young people in developing countries who are involved in the sustainable forest management process without being in a forestry school. This is crucial for young people in rural areas, indigenous peoples and forest-dependent peoples in order to implement sustainable forest management, and was addressed accordingly at the third and fourth sessions of the Forum.

8. The importance of higher forestry education in the implementation of sustainable forest management (Forum resolutions 4/1, paragraph 15, 4/3, paragraph 18, and 4/4, paragraph 9)

45. An overall understanding of forests requires adequate education at all levels, from early childhood to university-level forestry curricula, which was recognized in the resolutions of the fourth session of the Forum.

46. The criteria and indicators as methods for the implementation of sustainable forest management that have emerged from international agreements on forests, such as those of IPF, IFF and the Forum, must reach local professionals in order to be carried out. Implementation is still weak because of the lack of financial resources, but mainly because of insufficient knowledge resulting from deficient communication between the international and local levels. The children and youth major group raised awareness of this failure at the higher level of forestry education during the negotiations at the third and fourth sessions of the Forum. Governments finally addressed this concern in three resolutions that call for improved higher education to facilitate future implementation of sustainable forest management.

9. Forest-related scientific knowledge

47. The Forum addressed the need to support the contributions of young people, mainly students, to the execution and evolution of scientific research. As recently stated in the report of the Country Led Initiative in Support of the United Nations Forum on Forests Regarding a Future International Arrangement on Forests in Guadalajara, Mexico, political decisions should be based on scientific research. For science to make a future contribution to the process, it is vital that students — especially in developing countries — be prepared to serve as high-quality scientists in the future. Students should have access to relevant information about the international frameworks on forests to better identify the need for future research. Furthermore, forest research should include the social components of forest management as they are required, e.g., by young people. This was also stated at the third and fourth sessions of the Forum.

C. The role of youth in the future International Arrangement on Forests

48. As identified at the fourth session of the Forum, both the children a· 1 youth and women's major groups require special attention to guarantee genuine participation.

49. The children and youth major group is the only one in which not only the constituency but also the leaders are changing continuously owing to their age. It is a challenge to guarantee a constant high quality of genuine youth representation in the process. Adequate methods are required. The children and youth major group identified a regional approach as most helpful. Young people can be informed about the international and also the regional, national and local frameworks on forests at workshops on the regional level, where they also can collate information about their concerns that will be presented in the international process. A strong network between the young people, as provided by the International Forestry Students' Association, Initiatives jeunes and Global Youth Network, can foster the continuity of youth representation within the International Arrangement on Forests.

50. An obstacle experienced by youth and children non-governmental organizatons (NGOs) in gaining access to the United Nations is the stringent, exclusive criteria with which one has to deal in order to obtain status in the Economic and Social Council. The process to obtain the Council accreditation is long and demanding. It is hindering the participation of youth organizations within the Forum process. The Forum secretariat should further support the due recognition of the International Forestry Students' Association in order for it to obtain status in the Council.

51. At the Country Led Initiative in Support of the United Nations Forum on Forests on the Future of the International Arrangement on Forests, the major groups of women, children and youth, indigenous peoples, environmental non-governmental organizations and business and industry made a joint statement, which includes six important recommendations that would guarantee an enhanced participation of the children and youth and other major groups in general in the future International Arrangements on Forests:

- Clearly defined expectations by both Governments and major groups for the participation and involvement of the latter in the International Arrangement on Forests
- Support for major groups by the International Arrangement on Forests, including staff support for coordination and financial support for attendance at meetings and events
- Broader participation of major groups in International Arrangement on Forests components, including the Collaborative Partnership on Forests
- Transformation of the type of participation of major groups, which would like to be seen as real stakeholders in discussions and debates as they have in ad hoc expert group meetings; to facilitate the need of this major group to be well informed about all aspects of the process
- Assistance in organizing processes within their groups to obtain the broadest possible representation of views and opinions, from the local to the national and international levels, as well as assurance of continuity of participation

- Better exchange of information between local and international levels; this would also allow for improvement in the selection processes for representation in the International Arrangement on Forests.

IV. Youth activities in implementing sustainable forest management

52. The issues associated with forests are wide ranging and cover a great spectrum of sectors, including trade and globalization, pollution, governance, education, employment and poverty. In this context, the input of youth in implementing the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action, and eventually sustainable forest management, should be gauged.

53. Youth and children have a great responsibility not only for creating awareness and information-gathering but also for implementing the sustainable use of forests. Youth also bear the responsibility to ensure that their future environment is healthy and productive, in particular by protecting and nurturing the forests that maintain valuable biodiversity and provide fuel wood and food for future generations.

54. Described below are some of the youth activities that are contributing to the implementation of sustainable forest management. We have highlighted some examples from the international to the local levels as "best practices". These examples reflect the potential of youth in implementing sustainable forest management when given adequate support and opportunities.

A. International level

55. At the international level, youth involvement in forest-related decision-making processes, such as the Forum, is remarkable, facilitated through the focal points of the youth and children major group, namely the International Forestry Students' Association, Initiatives jeunes and the Global Youth Network. Youth participation is taking place in the Global Youth Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which is an annual event, the UNEP Global Youth Retreat, which is held to coincide with the UNEP Governing Council session, and the UNEP Youth Advisory Council, which is active in all fields of youth and environment, including forest issues. UNEP convened the Children's Conference on the Environment in Canada in 2002. During the past few years, Association representatives have participated in conferences of the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, forums of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Forestry Congress 2003 and numerous other international events.

56. Participation in international decision-making processes has had multiple effects. The young people participating represent their constituency in the discussions, bringing issues that concern local youth to international awareness. The knowledge and experience gained through participation in the above-mentioned processes is transferred back to the constituency by the representatives. The experience of the focal points of the children and youth major group is that the investments made to allow their participation pay back generously. The youth

representatives often have an eye-opening experience when they participate in international forest policy events. Through the participation of 34 youth delegates in international forest-related policy forums (the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) and the subsequent reporting back in their countries, over 2,000 forestry students and youth activists have been introduced to emerging issues of international forest policy during the past two years. Most of the group members heard little about processes, such as the Forum, before their participation.

57. The International Forestry Students' Association forms a wide network of forestry students throughout the world, on which the Association bases its main activities — meetings of students at the regional and international levels. The experience of the International Forestry Students' Association is that the most efficient way to engage and inspire young people is to bring them together.

58. Scouts have valuable experiences from gatherings of young people and organizing meetings of thousands of young people from all around the world. International meetings provide young people with forums and platforms for the exchange of skills, the transfer of information and the mobilization of youth organizations. The outcomes have been positive and have also promoted the involvement of many young people in environmental and forest-related actions. However, there are many youth organizations that do not have the human or financial resources to organize such events or to send representatives to participate in such meetings.

Best practice 1: Linking the policy processes by major groups

A valuable experience was gained with regard to the contribution of major groups of raising the profile of forests and establishing cross-sector linkages, when the major groups of children and youth and workers and trade unions cooperated to conduct a study of the existence of forest-related issues in poverty reduction strategy papers. In the study, entry points for linking forest issues to national poverty reduction strategies were identified, and later presented at a side event at the fourth session of the Forum. The outcomes of the study, combined with a message about the need to integrate sustainable forest management with poverty alleviation, have been included in the Millennium Development Goal Youth Paper, which will form part of the five-year review of the Millennium Development Goals in September 2005.

B. Regional level

59. Regional cooperation on forestry among youth and children has mainly fitted into the broader scheme of environmental issues. In the build-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, regional conferences on sustainable development were held in cooperation with United Nations agencies, in particular UNEP. These conferences dealt with a wide range of environmental issues, including forests and forest-related issues.

Best practice 2: Regional meetings of the International Forestry Students' Association

The regional meetings of forestry students have served as an excellent platform for the creation of partnerships and the sharing of experiences to promote sustainable forest management. Regional meetings bring together people of similar geographical backgrounds to discuss topics of common concern. The experiences from the International Forestry Students' Association Latin American Regional Meeting held in 2004 showed that building regional networks for youth enabled them to set common goals and targets and to work more efficiently towards achieving them. The Latin American network of forestry students has already made remarkable achievements in a short period of time in raising the awareness of forestry students to policy issues and in getting the voice of youth better heard in the forestry decision-making processes in their countries.

60. Regional youth platforms, such as the European Youth Forum and the African Youth Network/Forum, are actively involved in promoting environmental issues relating to forests through the establishment of sustainable development officers, who are responsible for youth policy and action on environment and development. In addition to these regional youth arrangements, there are regional offices of international youth NGOs that promote regional concerns, for example, the regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean and the International Youth Parliament of Oxfam. It is hoped that the United Nations regional commissions will enhance their profile with regard to the involvement of youth in forest issues.

C. National level

61. Some Member States have made provisions for or have included forest issues and forest education in their national secondary school curricula, i.e., Nigeria. The inclusion of forest issues in the national curricula at any level, whether primary, secondary or tertiary, is a positive action that serves to promote the awareness of children and youth with regard to forest issues. The importance of forests has become relevant to young people within the context of an educational environment, and Member States are encouraged to adopt this policy change as a strategy for targeting and engaging their youth population in forest issues.

62. At the national level, youth councils exist in many of the States Members of the United Nations. These national youth structures serve to engage youth in issues pertaining to the environment and development.

Best practice 3: Youth as a stakeholder in the formulation and implementation of National Forest Programmes

Youth participation in the formulation and implementation of the National Forest Programmes is still absent in many countries. However, there are some examples that can be introduced as best practices. Finland has invited young people to the steering committee of the Finnish National Forest Programme. In Brazil, the Committee of the National Forestry Programme includes students. Furthermore, the Government of Brazil has supported local young people in organizing events to collect youth input to the National Forest Programmes process. This approach has proved to be an excellent way to engage youth in this process, to increase their knowledge of the relevant policies and to ensure the efficient, equal and democratic participation of youth in the national forest policy process, as well as in the implementation of the national forest policies.

63. In many countries there are examples of the inclusion of youth in discussions on national forest policy as members of different committees. A number of Governments have agreed to invite one youth delegate to the sessions of the Forum as a member of the national delegation. Many countries have also invited youth to participate in the preparatory work for the Forum such as discussions and workshops among the stakeholders. Some countries have opened the reporting process to youth, giving them a chance to contribute to the preparation of documents. Several good practices exist, but they are not more than rare examples. In most countries, a true dialogue between decision makers and youth does not exist.

D. Local level

64. At the local level, youth action on forests is an effective tool in implementing sustainable forest management. A number of youth organizations are taking grass-roots action at the local level.

Best practice 4: Local stakeholders engaging in delivering forestry to primary education

The "Potential in Forestry" model was developed by 4-H Finland to introduce young people to and enhance their knowledge of nature, forest-related activities and career opportunities. The model is based on stakeholder partnerships at the local level. Different forestry stakeholders, together with primary schools, form groups called "forest teams" that are coordinated by 4-H. Forest teams arrange forest- and nature-oriented theme days, events, excursions, campaigns, visits, etc. Each organization has an applicable role following its own principles and resources. This pluralism guarantees that young people will get multiple views on the variety of nature in Finnish forests. The model has been a great success and it is rapidly spreading throughout Finland.

65. Urbanization is a challenge for both developed and developing countries. Cities are often more appealing to young people, since rural areas have high rates of unemployment and the reputation of being places with few or non-existent activities or opportunities for young people. The generally low profile of forests and the activities arising from them does not improve the image of the rural areas, which are often dependent on forests. However, it has been proved (by a 4-H study) that the participation of young people in the decision-making process at the local level increases their willingness to stay in rural areas or to return after finishing their studies. It has also been shown that such young people actively participate in the improvement and development of their livelihoods.

66. Encouraging enterprise among youth has proved to be another efficient way of developing rural areas. The "Learning by Doing" project model of 4-H encourages youth to make a living from forestry activities. For example, in Namibia and the United Republic of Tanzania, there are cooperation projects in which youth are starting and maintaining their own mini-enterprises with small-scale agroforestry, providing services and other relevant activities. Giving youth opportunities for enterprise and encouraging initiative enables them to make future contributions to the development of their communities.

V. Conclusion and recommendations

A. Implement decisions of the Forum

67. **The children and youth major group could contribute many of its concerns to the outcomes of the third and fourth sessions of the Forum. The recommendations of these texts, as well as the outcome of ad hoc expert group meetings and the Country Led Initiative in Guadalajara, Mexico, make clear proposals on how to strengthen and improve education in order to implement sustainable forest management at the local level and how to enhance the participation of young people in the International Arrangement on Forests process. To implement these proposals, effective partnerships among Governments, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, donors and organizations of the children and youth major group have to be established.**

B. Strengthen the role of local communities in forest management

68. **Young people tend to be the most vulnerable group in society. They are the first to suffer from deteriorating economic and social living conditions in communities, caused by increasing socio-economic problems often linked with the misuse of natural resources. Harmonized efforts are needed to link forest and youth issues to society and development. To improve the situation of local communities in developing countries, the future International Arrangement on Forests should:**

(a) Relate the underlying causes of deforestation, as found in macroeconomic policies, economic crises and infrastructure development, to sustainable forest management and its poverty-alleviating capacity;

(b) **Strengthen the role and the ownership of local communities in forest management;**

(c) **Guarantee that the profits of forestry reach the local people living in the forests;**

(d) **Support the implementation of sustainable forest management through education and the provision of financial means among local communities;**

(e) **Foster the democratic capacity of local communities and Governments with projects and processes that link good governance and sustainable forest management;**

(f) **Follow up the matter of decentralization and forestry by including the outcome of the Country Led Initiative on Decentralization, held in Interlaken, Switzerland, in 2004 in the process.**

C. Work for the overall recognition of forests as a natural part of society

69. **The access of young people to forests should be ensured and facilitated in all countries to avoid the loss of interest and connection to nature. Furthermore, the potential role of forests in improving the quality of life by offering opportunities for employment and recreation should be emphasized in order to raise the interest of young people in forests ecosystems.**

D. Create sustainable financial mechanisms supported by innovative educational and participation methods to foster youth activities in implementing sustainable forest management

70. **There is a strong need for developing financial mechanisms that support forest-related youth initiatives in both developed and developing countries, from the local to the international levels, including indigenous youth groups. These financial mechanisms need to ensure the equitable sharing of financial support. The mechanisms should include a monitoring system to prevent the inappropriate or inefficient use of financial resources. At the same time, educational and participation methods have to be developed to guarantee the sustainable use of financial resources.**

E. Strive for improvement in the education on sustainable forest management both within and outside formal education, at all levels

71. **Member States are encouraged to set standards of professional level forestry education by synchronizing the quality of the education. A strategy for filling the gaps in forestry curricula should be formulated in cooperation with other Member States. In addition to formal educational structures, the informal educational work carried out by various stakeholders should be recognized and supported. Countries and stakeholders are encouraged to establish**

partnerships for setting commonly agreed targets, avoiding duplication and ensuring as complete an educational programme as possible.

72. **It is our hope that the United Nations Forum on Forests will result in a successful transition from dialogue to the implementation of a tangible action plan. Youth from around the world are ready to accept the challenge of helping to make this happen. Although this group has demonstrated the ability to implement forest-related research and education projects, it has a much greater capacity to contribute. We look forward to hearing how our input has been given consideration in this process and to being called upon to help make progressive change a reality.**

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Note by the Secretariat**

Addendum

Discussion paper contributed by the scientific and technological communities major group***

Summary

The present discussion paper is a contribution by two networks of forestry research institutions, the Forestry Research Network for Sub-Saharan Africa (FORNESSA) and the Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions (APAFRI), in close collaboration with the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO). The paper (a) briefly describes FORNESSA and APAFRI, which provided the materials for the development of the paper; (b) assesses the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF), focusing on the most relevant proposals for the scientific and technological communities major group, the level of implementation of the relevant proposals at the global, regional, subregional and country levels, as well as obstacles and constraints to implementation; (c) assesses priority areas for action, with a focus on the most pressing proposals, and how future international arrangements could better address them; (d) recommends achievable goals and targets based on the assessed levels of implementation of the relevant and prioritized IPF/IFF proposals for action; and finally (e) provides concluding remarks and a summary of major recommendations.

* E/CN.18/2005/1.

** The present note was delayed owing to extended consultations within the scientific major group.

*** Prepared by two networks of forestry research institutions in Africa (FORNESSA) and Asia (APAFRI), in close collaboration with the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO).

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I. Introduction

1. The present discussion paper is a contribution by the scientific and technological communities major group to the fifth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests. It is prepared on the basis of information gathered by the Forestry Research Network for Sub-Saharan Africa (FORNESSA) and the Asia Pacific Association of Forestry Research Institutions (APAFRI).

2. FORNESSA is a federation of three subregional forestry research networks: the Association of Forestry Research Institutions in Eastern Africa (AFREA), the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD) and the forestry research and training unit of the Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR) Directorate within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) secretariat. Its goal is to strengthen forestry research in sub-Saharan Africa for greater impact on the management and conservation of forest and tree resources for sustainable development.

3. APAFRI is a non-governmental organization comprising institutions in the Asia-Pacific region that are actively engaged in forestry and forestry-related research. Its vision is to be recognized as a dynamic, strong and self-reliant forestry research association in the Asia-Pacific region that promotes innovative research and development efforts in support of national, regional and community development.

4. The paper looks at the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) proposals for action and considers those that are specific to forest science and technology. Progress in their implementation has been assessed mainly for Africa and the Asia-Pacific region, focusing on constraints, success stories and relevance in addressing the pressing problems, needs and concerns of the scientific and technological community.

5. The paper concludes with recommendations regarding achievable goals and targets in the light of the assessment of the implementation levels of the proposals for action.

II. Brief assessment of the implementation of relevant Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action

A. Relevant Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals to the scientific and technological communities major group

6. The approximately 270 proposals, collectively known as the IPF/IFF proposals for action,[1] are all important globally as they are intended to "provide Governments, international organizations, private sector entities and all other major groups guidance on how to further develop, implement and coordinate national and international policies on sustainable forest management".[2] For the scientific and

[1] See E/CN.17/1997/2 and E/CN.17/2000/14.

[2] See http://www.un.org/esa/forests.

technological communities major group, however, 24 of the proposals specifically pertain to scientific forest-related knowledge. These relevant proposals fit into five clearly defined areas of action (see table below).

Summary of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals for action related to scientific forest-related knowledge

Area of action	*Summary of proposals for action*
Interaction between science and policy	Two IFF proposals (see E/CN.17/2000/14, paras. 96 (c) and 98 (b)) are made in this area to: (i) Improve linkages between science and policy processes; (ii) Involve guidance from all interested parties.
Address the knowledge gaps and set research priorities	Six IPF proposals (see E/CN.17/1997/12, paras. 46 (g), 50 (b), 94 (a), 94 (b), 94 (d) and 104 (c)) and four IFF proposals (see E/CN.17/2000/14, paras. 96 (a), 96 (d), 97 (d) and 98 (a)) are made in this area to: (i) Set research needs and priorities nationally and globally; (ii) Address knowledge gaps; (iii) Promote and strengthen research efforts in support of sustainable forest management.
Promote efficient sharing of information and strengthen networks	Three IPF proposals (see E/CN.17/1997/12, paras. 58 (b) (vii), 94 (a) (ii) and 94 (a) (iii)) and two IFF proposals (see E/CN.17/2000/14, paras. 97 (c) and 98 (c)) are made in this area to allow results in information to be available for all users to support decision-making, develop new and innovative means of disseminating information and technologies and promote and make use of existing networks, institutions and mechanisms in efficient sharing of information.
Strengthen research capacity and mobilize funding for forest research	Two IPF proposals (see E/CN.17/1997/12, paras. 94 (a) (iv) and 94 (c)) and three IFF proposals (see E/CN.17/2000/14, paras. 96 (b), 97 (a) and 97 (b)) are made in this area to examine new ways to mobilize funding for forest research to accomplish its objectives and build capacity at the national, regional and global levels.
Apply participatory mechanisms to integrate research into planning processes	One IPF proposal (see E/CN.17/1997/12, para. 17 (e)) is made in this area as a transversal item for all areas.

B. Level of the implementation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests proposals related to science and technology

7. In assessing progress in this area, the report of the Secretary-General on scientific forest-related knowledge, prepared for the fourth session of the United

Nations Forum on Forests, included the following observation: "progress in strengthening science and policy interaction has been made at the international level, but the degree of interaction and the extent to which forest-related scientific knowledge is used for policy-making varies considerably among countries and tends to be low in particular in developing countries" (E/CN.18/2004/9). This observation remains largely valid today. Nevertheless, a number of significant and encouraging initiatives towards creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action and other international arrangements on the environment have been undertaken at the international, regional, subregional and national levels.

Arrangements at the international level

8. At the global level, several innovative initiatives have been established in recent years to facilitate communication between scientists, policy makers and other stakeholders in view of improving science-policy interaction. These initiatives include: (a) intergovernmental forums and subsidiary advisory bodies; (b) task-oriented expert groups set up by forest-related global conventions, instruments and organizations; (c) the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF); (d) the multi-stakeholders dialogue; and (e) increased cooperation between the scientific community and international organizations, leading to key informative publications, such as the *State of the World's Forests*, issued by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and *ATO/ITTO principles, criteria and indicators for the sustainable management of African natural tropical forests*, issued jointly by the International Tropical Timber Organization and the African Timber Organization.

Arrangements at the regional and subregional levels

9. At the regional and subregional levels, progress in implementing the IPF/IFF proposals of interest to the scientific and technological communities major group has been observed as well as through a number of significant initiatives in the following areas:

(a) Improving the interaction between science and policy:

(i) The International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) task force on science/policy interface has produced guidelines for research organizations and research scientists providing best practices for the interaction between the science community and policy makers;

(ii) IUFRO-Special Programme for Developing Countries (SPDC) has initiated a training module for forest scientists on the theme "International forest-related initiatives and agreements and their implementation in the context of national forest programmes: linking research and science with practice";

(iii) The IUFRO task force on public relations for forest science has produced a public relations manual that will be used in another new IUFRO-SPDC training module on the theme "Communicating forest research: making science work for policy and management";

(iv) The ongoing work of the IUFRO special project on world forests, society and environment includes compiling a book on forests in the global balance

and a policy brief to be submitted at the fifth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests;

(b) Promoting efficient sharing of information and strengthening networks:

(i) Establishment of the Global Forest Information Service (GFIS) as a collaborative partnership on forests initiative. The Service is operated by IUFRO, FAO, the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and other national and international forestry expert institutions;

(ii) GFIS Africa, with five GFIS service centres established strategically throughout Africa (in Dakar, for the benefit of the Sahelien countries of West and Central Africa; in Kumasi, Ghana, to cater to the humid coastal countries of West Africa; in Kenya for the East African countries; in Libreville for the countries of the Congo Basin; and in Harare for the Southern African countries);

(iii) GFIS Asia Pacific, currently being developed;

(iv) Regional and subregional forest information and research networks have been established to strengthen research capacities and promote collaboration and efficient provision and sharing of relevant information, with the overall goal of strengthening science-policy interaction for sustainable forest management. FORNESSA, the African Forestry Research Network (AFORNET), the Sub-Saharan Africa Forest Genetic Resources Network (SAFORGEN), established by the International Plant Genetic Resource Institute (IPGRI), among others; and the Asia Pacific Forest Genetic Resources Programme (APFORGEN), established by IPGRI and APAFRI and currently hosted by APAFRI in the Asia-Pacific region, are but a few examples of regional forest research-related networks. AFREA (in Eastern Africa), CORAF/WECARD (in West and Central Africa) and the SADC-FANR research and training unit (in Southern Africa) are outstanding examples of subregional forest research networks;

(c) Strengthening research capacity and mobilize funding for research:

(i) IUFRO-SPDC self-learning courses in research management, proposal preparation and information management;

(ii) Training efforts by the International Foundation for Science, the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), etc.;

(d) Applying participatory mechanisms to integrate research into planning processes:

(i) Promotion of multi-stakeholder learning initiatives through FAO, the International Center for development oriented Research in Agriculture (ICRA), the European Tropical Forest Research Network (ETFRN), IUFRO, FORNESSA, the Centro Agronomia Tropical de Investigación y Enseñanza (CATIE) and APAFRI;

(ii) The forestry outlook study for Africa initiated by FAO on the recommendations of the African Forestry and Wildlife Commission (AFWC) and the Near East Forestry Commission, in partnership with the countries and institutions (such as the African Development Bank, the United Nations

Development Programme and the World Bank) concerned about forests and forestry in the region, is a participatory mechanism with great potential for forest sector planning, investment and development;

(iii) The Asia-Pacific forestry sector outlook study, recommended at the sixteenth session of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC) in 1996 and coordinated by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok, which was concluded in 1997, is another participatory mechanism with great potential for forest sector planning, investment and development;

(iv) The national forest programmes promoting participatory approaches in planning and managing the forest sector for sustainable development;

(v) The recently initiated national forest programme facility, an innovative partnership among developing countries, leading international partners and FAO to support national forest programmes through capacity development and information-sharing, is another outstanding example;

(c) Promoting strong regional forestry policy dialogue:

(i) The FAO regional forestry commissions provide a viable forum for regional policy dialogue, which could contribute to creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action;

(ii) The African Forestry and Wildlife Commission, which is the largest forestry forum at the highest forest policy level on the African continent, is an example. Through AFWC, heads of forestry and wildlife services meet every two years to discuss issues of regional interest, exchange information, experiences and technologies; provide advice to FAO and Governments on priorities and programmes; and help develop regional inputs to the global forest dialogue, among other tasks;

(iii) At the fourteenth session of AFWC, held in February 2004 in Accra, a workshop on implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action in Africa was held, at which participants recommended, among other things, that AFWC provide a forum for strong regional forestry policy dialogue, including preparations for future global meetings; a common African position at the fifth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests; and the sharing of experiences in implementation;

(iv) In an effort to facilitate the implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action in the Asia-Pacific region, APFC recommended at its twentieth session that:

- APFC member countries take further action to implement internationally agreed actions related to forests, especially the IPF/IFF proposals for action;
- FAO help convey member country experiences in working towards sustainable forest management, including successes and impediments, to the Committee on Forestry and the United Nations Forum on Forests;
- APFC member countries actively participate and provide forestry expertise in the intergovernmental negotiations related to forests, especially the United Nations Forum on Forests and the conventions on biodiversity, desertification and climate change;

- For thorough regional preparations prior to the fifth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests in 2005, at which future international arrangements on forests will be decided upon, FAO should examine the possibility of organizing an intersessional meeting for this purpose or provide other mechanisms to assist countries' preparations;

- FAO and other CPF members should continue supporting member countries in implementing the IPF/IFF proposals for action through effective national forest programmes, consistent with the recommendations of the Committee on Forestry and various other international forums;

(f) Emergence of regional and subregional coordinating initiatives

(i) A number of regional and subregional partnership initiatives have emerged in recent years to create platforms for coordination and consultation between countries and donor agencies and development partners.

(ii) The New Partnership for Africa's Development and its environmental action plan, which covers mapping and inventory, monitoring and assessment, national forest programmes, protected areas, the private sector, and illegal logging and poaching, is an example.

(iii) The Conférence sur les écosystèmes de forêts denses humides d'Afrique centrale (Brazzaville Process) and the Conference des ministres en charges des forêts d'Afrique centrale, formed following the Summit of Central African Heads of State on conservation and sustainable management of tropical forests, held in Yaoundé, in 1999, which contribute to the harmonization of national forest policies and actions, are but two outstanding examples at the subregional level in the Congo Basin, the second largest contiguous tract of tropical forest in the world;

(iv) The Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel, which harmonizes the efforts of its nine member States and calls upon its member countries to bring scientific information to bear in their fight against desertification and drought, is another subregional initiative contributing directly and/or indirectly to the implementation of international arrangements on forests and the environment, including the IPF/IFF proposals for action.

Arrangements at the national and subnational levels

10. It is at the national and subnational levels on the ground that efforts to implement the IPF/IFF proposals for actions in general, and particularly those related to science and technology, are the least visible.

11. Nevertheless, African countries, as well as countries in the Asia-Pacific region, recognize the need to embrace the IPF/IFF proposals for action as an important advance towards sustainable forest management and a basis on which to move from political dialogue to action on the ground, addressing such issues as deforestation and forest degradation, forest health and productivity, conservation and protection of all types of forests, rehabilitation and maintenance of forest cover, public participation and such cross-cutting issues as capacity-building, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, international trade and mobilization of financial resources.

12. It is observed in both Africa and the Asia-Pacific region that many countries have already integrated or are in the process of integrating many relevant IPF/IFF proposals into their national forest programmes. For example, the need to shift from a centralized forest management regime to a decentralized one, whereby power, responsibilities and resources are devolved by the central State to lower territorial entities and locally elected bodies, is widely accepted in the two regions. One fundamental implication of this is the opportunity that has opened up for public participation and for the research needs of the most vulnerable of society to be fully included in the prioritization process. Accordingly, the new IUFRO-SPDC training module for forest scientists, on the theme "International forest-related initiatives and agreements and their implementation in the context of national forest programmes", aims to strengthen the ability of forest scientists to contribute to national forest programme processes.

13. Despite plans at the national level, real tangible action and results on the ground at the subnational level are not yet fully visible owing to a number of constraints, which are identified in the next section. Many important practical actions are being implemented on the ground at the local level by national and international NGOs such as the German Agency for Technical Cooperation, the World Wildlife Fund, the World Conservation Union and FAO, through its technical support to countries. Nevertheless, these actions remain individualized projects, which are limited in time, space and number of beneficiaries, while the problems (such as biodiversity loss, land deforestation and degradation, etc.) that they are supposed to address result from the land and resource use practices of large numbers of people distributed over large areas and acting over a long period of time.

C. Obstacles and constraints to implementation on the ground

14. In general, efforts to implement the IPF/IFF proposals for action on the ground, where they matter most, have been hampered mainly by two factors: lack of awareness of the IPF/IFF processes and outcomes and lack of human, technical and financial capacities to effectively prioritize and implement the proposals. This assessment is valid for both Africa and the Asia-Pacific region, in particular for the scientific and technological community.

15. It is widely argued that the economic difficulties that most African countries face, coupled with weak forestry institutions, hinder attempts to sustain sustainable forest management efforts. With 32 countries classified as heavily indebted poor countries, African policy makers are preoccupied with finding ways to alleviate this burden and provide for the basic needs of their populations.

16. At a workshop held before its recent session, the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission determined that the limited capacity to implement the proposals and to report on progress, owing particularly to overwhelming reporting requests from international processes, constituted a major constraint.

17. Other constraints related to research capacity include: insufficient collaborative research; poor linkages between research and intended users; inadequate flow of information and access to scientific literature; low levels of remuneration for research and a lack of continuity in support for research

programmes.[3] Another issue of profound concern for future research capacity (e.g. in Eastern and Southern Africa) is the continued erosion of human technical capacity owing to HIV/AIDS.

III. Priority areas for action

A. Most urgent proposals for action

18. Of the existing proposals for action, the scientific and technological communities major group considers two IPF proposals (see E/CN.17/1997/12, paras. 94 (a) (iv) and 94 (c)) and three IFF proposals (see E/CN.17/2000/14, paras. 96 (b), 97 (a) and 97 (b)) to be the most urgent ones as they concern the most binding constraint to implementing all the other proposals related to the scientific and technological communities major group.

19. Indeed, if research capacities are strengthened and funds for forest research mobilized adequately, there is a greater chance to address the knowledge gaps effectively and in a timely fashion and set research priorities, which in turn will contribute to improving linkages between science and policy processes, promoting efficient sharing of information and strengthening networks and applying participatory mechanisms to integrate research into planning processes.

B. Future international agreements/arrangements and science and technology priorities

20. Science and technology indeed constitute a major asset, which, when properly developed and utilized, can play a vital role in the formulation and implementation of forest policy for sustainable forest management. This has been already recognized in Agenda 21 (see chaps. 31 and 35) and by the United Nations Forum on Forests, which included forest-related scientific knowledge in the agenda of its fourth session.

21. Future international agreements and arrangements need to go further in recognizing the importance of science and technology by seriously considering ways to facilitate research capacity-building and to mobilize funding for research in order to unlock the potential for scientific information and appropriate technologies to contribute to sustainable development. The following suggestions are ways for future international arrangements on forests to better address these urgent proposals:

(a) Find innovative ways to reduce the debt burden of developing countries so as to channel funds into sustainable management of natural resources, including scientific knowledge development as viable support for the process;

(b) Increase donor interest in collaborative initiatives, which could help advance implementation of the urgent proposals through effective flows of information at all levels of decision-making, and especially increase the awareness of policy makers, landowners, communities and representatives outside the forest sector;

[3] See: M. J. Spilsbury, et al. (2004), "Forest-related Research Capacity in Eastern Africa: Burundi, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda". 2004. FAO, CIFOR, African Evaluation Association research report.

(c) Help countries with proper valuation of forest products and services so as to achieve wealth production through the sustainable utilization of forest resources;

(d) Consider some scheme to affect payments for environmental services as key instruments in transferring financial resources to local communities and providing real opportunities for rural people to benefit from the processing and marketing of non-wood forest products and ecotourism.

IV. Recommendations regarding achievable goals and targets

22. **Given the low implementation levels of the IPF/IFF proposals for action on the ground (at the national and subnational levels) and the need to address effectively the most urgent proposals identified above, the following goals and targets ought to be set for the international community:**

(a) **By 2010, ensure that all forest-related research organizations in economically disadvantaged countries are connected to the Internet so as to improve access to information, improve communications and enable greater collaborative efforts. Support for national and regional research networks and their communication infrastructure should be a key component in related investments;**

(b) **By 2020, reduce poverty in developing nations by 50 per cent through a number of vigorous and coordinated national and international actions, including debt relief measures, fair trade in agricultural products, rural livelihood improvement through electrification, road construction and market development, and health and clean water projects. Research should play a crucial role in this process. Poverty is the driving force in land degradation and unsustainable land use practices and forest resources utilization. Unless rural poverty is significantly reduced, sustainable management of land and forest resources may never be achieved. This objective is part of the Millennium Development Goals, already on the global agenda, and thus could easily win acceptance in the international community;**

(c) **Achieve agreement on an international common forests/natural resources fund to which each developed nation will contribute an agreed upon amount weighted by its contribution to global warming. Developing countries will contribute to this fund a percentage of their external debt payments. These funds will serve to build forest research capacities in developing countries and finance the removal of all major obstacles to the implementation of proposals for action from international agreements and arrangements on forests. This goal is achievable since it is in line with the Kyoto Protocol. It does not require countries to reduce their emission levels, but rather to compensate the world for the damage they cause to the environment. It is fair and objective and could discourage increased pollution while contributing to mobilizing the financial means needed to successfully achieve a satisfactory level of sustainable forest management of the world's forest heritage;**

(d) **Establish a window at the Bretton Woods institutions (the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund) for special loans at near-zero interest for investments in sustainable natural resources management and capacity-building and research in support of the implementation of proposals**

for action on international agreements and arrangements, such as the IPF/IFF proposals. This is in line with the original purpose of setting up these financial institutions, in response to a major challenge facing the world after the First and Second World Wars. Today, the sustainable management of the world's forests and forest resources is one of the greatest challenges facing the world. One could successfully argue that as was the case after the First and Second World Wars, the Bretton Woods institutions should be positioned to take on the new challenges of the Millennium Development Goals.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

23. Achieving sustainable management of the world's forests and forest resources is certainly one of the greatest challenges facing the world today. If the international community holds this truth to be self-evident, then courageous actions should be taken, including bringing scientific and technological knowledge to bear in facing this challenge. The international community should consider various drastic recommendations, including putting real power behind the suggested proposals on international arrangements in order to facilitate their implementation at the local level. With regard to the proposals for action related to science and technology, it is recommended that:

(a) The international community press for actions to invest in building forest research capacities and support research networks and activities, in particular in economically disadvantaged countries, so that science and research can make a difference in real-life problems through the timely delivery of utilizable research-based solutions;

(b) The international community press for actions to support FAO, IUFRO, regional forest research networks and other international organizations involved in building forest research capacities, improving communications, sharing information and networking between forest scientists, research institutions, policy makers and other stakeholders in the forest sector and other land-based sectors;

(c) The international community press for actions to achieve agreement for the establishment of an international forestry fund, to which developed nations should contribute a certain percentage of their GNP in relation to their propensity to contribute to global warming, while developing countries should contribute from their external debt payments;

(d) The international community press for actions to support the Bretton Woods institutions in setting up appropriate financial facilities in support of sustainable management of natural resources in general and forests in particular.